significances which tickle his intellectual pride, it prevents him frorr drawing the real conclusions which constitute the truth. Illusion, acted upon by a ratiocinative will, assumes the texture of fiction and illumines truth for a while; but as truth organises itself into a structure of reality, the power of illusion is lost, and the illusionist is disillu-sioned and his pet dream shattered by the fierce sun of truth. Guy Brissenden is unhappy, not because he is consciously aware of his being the 'sacrificed', but because his wife, whom he loves very much, is neglecting him. May Server is unhappy and terrified because life has not been kind to her - she has lost her three children, and possibly her husband also - and she is in search of affection and sympathy.

What the narrator fails to understand is that May Server is in love with him. Mrs. Brissenden, at one stage, asks Obert if the narrator was falling in love with May Server. The narrator asks him-self, "Had ! myself suddenly fallen so much in love with Mrs, Server that the care of her reputation had become with me an obsession? It was of no use saying that I simply pitied her."[18] Obert feels that the disappointed May Server seeks the company of Guy Brissenden, who is also unhappy because of the indifference of his wife. The narrator's instinctive feeling for May Server is one of pity, but as a consequence of the hardening of the heart by the head he* remains unmoved by the dictates of his heart. He is so enamoured of his hypothesis - that May Server is the fount of Long's wit - that he is totally blind to a very natural explanation of May's strange behaviour, i. e., that she might be in love with himself.[30] May's fear and hesita-tion are natural because of the narrator's attitude, which is at once detached and sympathetic towards her. In his over-worship of the head, the narrator dries up the 'sacred fount' of the heart, and thus acquires a knowledge which is divorced from the moral fount, the heart, from which the stream of all life emerges. Like the governess in *The Turn of the Screw** the narrator delights in detecting

evil in others, while being unaware of the evil in himself. The narrator anticipates Lambert Strether, whose consciousness, however, improves through experience, unlike the narrator's which deteriorates because of the hardening of his heart.

The image of the mysterious figure in the novel has drawn a good deal of critical attention. Evidently, Henry James is seeking to dramatise in the figure the differing modes of sensibility among the characters in the light of an objective test, Most important of all